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GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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MDARD Announces Value Added & Regional Food Systems Grant Project Awardees

LANSING, Mich. – Today, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Director Jamie Clover Adams announced eight projects awarded funds under the competitive Value Added and Regional Food System Grant Program.

"The awarded proposals reflect the opportunities within Michigan's diverse food and agriculture industry to expand value-added food processing, food hub development and increase access to fresh and nutritious Michigan foods," said Clover Adams. "These projects illustrate the critical role the food and agriculture sector plays in our state while strengthening Michigan's impact in the global marketplace."

The department received 51 proposals with requests totaling more than \$8 million. Of those, MDARD awarded the following eight projects leveraging over \$2.4 million in matching funds:

- **Arbre Farms Corporation**, of Walkerville - \$210,000
Expand production to include year-round manufacturing by adding a new locally-grown potato processing line, substantially increasing their local workforce.
- **Fair Food Network**, of Ann Arbor - \$249,000
Expand Double Up Food Bucks, Michigan's statewide healthy food incentive program, in Flint to help families purchase more fruits and vegetables while simultaneously supporting Michigan's farmers.
- **Foremost Farms**, of Baraboo, WI - \$210,000
Conduct a feasibility assessment of potential site requirements for a dairy processing facility in Michigan.
- **Michigan State University/Michigan Brewers Guild**, of Chatham - \$29,300
Conduct a supply chain and economic impact analysis of the Michigan craft beer industry focusing on the potential for utilization of local ingredients by Michigan breweries.
- **Seeds and Spores Family Farm, LLC.**, of Marquette - \$53,400
Establish a certified kitchen on their farm in Marquette for use by chefs, caterers and other farms to increase the use of UP grown food products.
- **Shoreline Fruit, LLC.**, of Traverse City - \$210,000
Enhance fresh pressed tart cherry juice process and expand to higher value-add products for a year-round operating line.
- **Winery at Black Star Farms, LLC.**, of Suttons Bay - \$210,000
Establish innovative Flash Détente red-wine processing equipment to be utilized by Michigan wine-grape growers and winemakers to improve the quality of red wines processed in Michigan.
- **Wolverine Human Services**, of Detroit - \$155,000

Establish an apple orchard, community food gardens, a farm stand, education opportunities, and increasing healthy food access in Detroit's Eastside.

MDARD promotes and manages several competitive grant programs through the Agriculture Development Division. More about these programs can be found at www.michigan.gov/mdardgrants.

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Editor's Note: Below are quotes from each of the grant recipients.

"Foremost Farms is aggressively working with other cooperatives to provide a much-needed local home for the milk produced by our members and other area farmers. With the region's milk production projected to continue growing, siting new dairy processing assets in Michigan will bring supply chain efficiencies, economic growth and jobs to the area."

Michael Doyle
President & CEO, Foremost Farms USA

"With this value added food systems grant from the Michigan Department of Agriculture, our capabilities to process fresh cherries into high-value products will be greatly expanded. The fresh juice and export concentrate markets represent a tremendous opportunity for Shoreline Fruit to grow into those market categories and sell more Michigan tart cherries for our growers."

John Somavilla
CEO, Shoreline Fruit, LLC

"Bringing a value added processing grant to the Central UP will provide farmers with additional marketing possibilities and eaters with a new palette of options for healthy local foods."

Jeff Hatfield
Owner, Seeds and Spores Family Farm, LLC.

"Wolverine Human Services is excited to pair with MDARD to build the Core Orchard's Apple Orchard and Garden Market on Detroit's Eastside. Wolverine Human Services has been a member of the Jefferson Mack Neighborhood for nearly 30 years at the Wolverine Center on the corner of Charlevoix and Lenox, and has remained committed to efforts that improve access and quality of life to the residents of these neighborhoods. It is our goal to develop a sustainable u-pick apple orchard, community gardens, and a farmers' market in this neighborhood."

Greg Hoffman
Community Coordinator, Wolverine Human Services

"Funding through the Value Added Grant program supports a collaborative effort between Michigan State University and the Michigan craft beer industry to not only determine the impact that sourcing Michigan hops and barley has on the agricultural economy, but also the potential future impact of these industries as they meet the demand by scaling up acreage and processing capabilities within the state."

Ashley McFarland
U.P. Research and Extension Center Coordinator,
Michigan State University

"With MDARD's support we are expanding and enhancing the Double Up Food Bucks program in Flint to ensure more children and families get more healthy food precisely when they need it most."

Oran Hesterman,
President and CEO, Fair Food Network

“Arbre Farms is honored to be a part of the 2016 grant program, which will help us to continue our innovative production strategies and build on our beneficial relationships with Michigan farmers. We are excited about these new opportunities for economic growth and further development in partnership with the Michigan agricultural community in Oceana County and across the state.”

Dylan Marks
President, Arbre Farms Corporation

"Innovation such as flashe detente processing will be an incredibly positive influence on the consistency and quality of red wines produced in Michigan. We are thrilled to share this technology with our fellow winemakers and, we look forward to the impact on the reputation of our red wine industry here and outside the state."

Lee Lutes
Winemaker & General Manager, Black Star Farms